

What Lifestyle Measures Can Help Prevent Gout?

Avoid Purine-Rich Foods

Because uric acid levels are only minimally affected by diet, dietary therapy does not play a large role in the prevention of gout. Still, people who have suffered an attack of gout may benefit from reducing their intake of purine-rich foods if they habitually eat unusually large quantities of such foods. They include beer and other alcoholic beverages, anchovies, sardines (in oil), fish roes, herring, yeast, organ meats (liver, kidneys), legumes (dried beans, peas, and soybeans), meat extracts, consommé, gravies, mushrooms, spinach, asparagus, cauliflower, and poultry.

Protein Restriction

Diets high in protein, particularly animal protein, increase uric acid. Although few studies have been conducted to determine the value of reducing protein, one study of gout patients suggested that eating tofu, which is made from soy and is a source of complete protein, may be a better choice than meats.

Maintain Healthy Weight

A supervised weight-loss program may, however, be a more effective way to reduce uric acid levels if you are overweight. Crash dieting, on the other hand, is counterproductive because it can increase uric acid levels and can cause an acute attack.

Maintain Fluids and Avoid Alcohol

Drinking plenty of water and other nonalcoholic beverages helps remove gout crystals from the body. Heavy drinking, especially binge drinking of beer or distilled spirits, should be avoided, because alcohol is a source of purines and can also cause overproduction and underexcretion of uric acid.

Avoid Joint Injury

People with gout should also attempt to identify and avoid activities that cause repetitive joint trauma, such as the wearing of tight shoes.

Foods with very high purine levels:

Anchovies	Brains
Gravies	Kidneys
Liver	Sardines
Sweetbreads	

Foods with high purine levels:

Bacon	Beef
Calf tongue	Carp
Chicken soup	Codfish
Duck	Goose
Halibut	Lentils
Perch	Pork
Rabbit	Sheep
Shellfish	Trout
Turkey	Veal
Venison	

Foods with moderately high purine levels:

Asparagus	Bluefish
Bouillon	Cauliflower
Chicken	Crab
Ham	Herring
Kidney beans	Lima beans
Lobster	Mushrooms
Mutton	Navy beans
Oatmeal	Oysters
Peas	Salmon
Spinach	Tripe
Tuna	